Supernatural; Lucifer/Castiel; godless and stained.

PG-13, dark fic. What happens when Castiel's fallen so far that the angel-killing swords just give him stab wounds instead of destruction?

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The worst realization to have when you are falling from Grace is to discover that stab wounds hurt.

Castiel stares at the angel, eyes wide and panicked when he realizes that he's not dead.

The silver blade gleams in his shoulder, and it *hurts*, and Castiel can see blood staining it.

He's not dead. He should be relieved. He reaches and pulls out the blade, gritting his teeth against the pain.

The blood flows freely as he kills the angel who attacked him. The stab wound he delivers grants him a blast of angelic power like a hot wind releasing as the angel dies.

It's the same kind of stab wound that Castiel received moments ago.

It is cold necessity that drives Castiel to collect his own blade from the floor and to keep the blade he killed this angel with.

It is cold necessity that keeps him from falling to his knees in despair.

He doesn't return to the Winchesters in time. He is collected en-route by a hand on his shoulder and the sound of wings.

There is no ring of fire this time. Just a hand on his injured shoulder, a casual violation of personal space. Castiel can see his blood staining Lucifer's fingers.

"There is no point in taking me, Lucifer." Castiel says. He doesn't see why Lucifer would have an interest in him, especially now.

"I want to know why you're still alive," Lucifer murmurs. "Castiel, I admire you."

Castiel can't answer.

Lucifer moves closer, looking into his eyes. "There's hardly any trace of angel in you, as I'm sure you know. Yet you still match blades with angels who had skill beyond your own, even when you were at full strength."

"I adapted," Castiel says quietly. He doesn't want to be here. He can't fly, not with Lucifer grounding him.

"My demons told me how easily you were defeated, Castiel," Lucifer murmurs. "How you barely escaped Hell with Dean, reaching him only through the sacrifices of your garrison and your speed."

He's examining Castiel, considering something. Castiel doesn't move, doesn't speak. He focuses on the pain in his shoulder, which still hasn't healed.

"My offer still stands, Castiel. I could grant you strength, and," Lucifer's whispering. "A taste of home."

Its pain will help him maintain the strength of will required to deny Lucifer. Castiel shakes his head once, trying not to think of how glorious Lucifer looks, under the vessel, and of how strong he is. Trying not to think of how much he craves Heaven, now that it is denied to him.

Lucifer pats his shoulder in a faux-friendly gesture and Castiel flinches.

"I'm keeping my eye on you, Castiel," Lucifer says with a dark chuckle. "There's always a place at my side for you - just say yes when you're ready."

And he's gone.